



TURNOVER

Town Acceptance:

The Kittery Town Council by unanimous consent at its regular meeting on October 14, 2014 accepted the gift of all the Memorial Project improvements (flagpole, signage, monumentation, benches, trees and plantings, and water-electricity additions) along with \$5,000 in funds to establish a municipal account to be used for future maintenance costs.

In the Group's request to Council, we noted:

"The Thresher improvements in the Circle and park reflect the stately, dignified, and symbolic objective of the Project Group in honoring the men of Thresher in the town she was built in, and signify Kittery's pride in our rich maritime history in standing up for the freedom of this great country and clearly displaying that we honor our own."

Silent Strength author D. Allen Kerr intends to donate the proceeds from sales of the book and any donations or future funding raising can be made payable to "THRESHER MEMORIAL FUND ACCOUNT 5007" and sent to: Town of Kittery Finance Office, 200 Rogers Road, Kittery, ME 03904.

Kittery After Hours Rotary Club:

A very dedicated community-service oriented group of local folks, incorporated under the Rotary umbrella, has accepted the role of continuing project administration. The Project e-mail, website, and Facebook accounts are in process of being transferred. David Sutton, PNS retiree, will be the administrator. Details will be published soon.

Final Budget

Net zero is always a positive achievement in project management and we are pleased to note that we did it (OK...it took a bit of final contribution to make the check for the maintenance fund for the Town equal exactly \$5,000). Suffice to say that every contribution counted!

Memorial Circle Flagpole (<i>Base/Pole/Flags</i>)	\$62,996.98
Memorial Circle (<i>Signage/Hardscape/Landscape</i>)	\$42,628.93
Memorial Park CoH (<i>Pavers/Plaque/Benches/Walks/Landscape</i>)	\$89,486.54
Post-Project (<i>Flags/Electricity/Maintenance</i>)	\$5,000.00
Other Expenses	<u>\$16,762.16</u>
EXPENSE TOTAL	\$216,874.61
Memorial Donations & Pledges (<i>Contributor Funds - Direct In-Kind</i>)	\$140,758.91
Dedication Events & Admin (<i>Separately Donated</i>)	\$16,762.16
Other In-Kind (Engineer, Legal, etc) (<i>Separately Donated</i>)	<u>\$59,353.54</u>
DONATIONS TOTAL	\$216,874.61

That does include the yet-to-be installed historic marker for Memorial Park orchestrated by D. Allen Kerr, expected to be there soon (full size on website):



USS THRESHER (SSN 593) NEVER TO BE FORGOTTEN

The nuclear attack submarine USS Thresher (SSN 593) was the most advanced naval vessel on the sea when it sank more than 200 miles off the New England coast on the morning of 10 April 1963. Designed and built at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard here in Kittery, Maine, the Thresher was lost while conducting deep-diving tests after a nine-month overhaul at the Yard.

A total of 129 U.S. Navy officers, sailors and civilian technicians perished that morning - the worst submarine disaster the world has ever known.

The tragedy occurred at the height of the Cold War with the Soviet Union, just six months after the Cuban Missile Crisis. It was the first time a nuclear submarine had ever been lost at sea, generating international media attention. World leaders such as Queen Elizabeth II, Charles DeGaulle, Francisco Franco and Chiang Kai-Shek all sent the U.S. government letters of sympathy. Flags across the country were flown at half-mast.



"The future of our country will always be sure when there are men such as these to give their lives to preserve it."
- President John F. Kennedy
April 1963

A Navy Court of Inquiry determined that the accident was likely caused by a piping failure. The spray of sea water caused the submarine's nuclear reactor to shut down, according to the court's findings. The Thresher then sank toward the ocean floor until it was crushed by the enormous pressure of the Atlantic.

Today the remains of the shattered vessel lie 8,400 feet below the surface.

Commissioned in 1961, the Thresher was the first of a dynamic new class of vessels built to serve as a deterrent to Soviet aggression during the Cold War. Designed specifically to hunt and destroy its Soviet counterparts, SSN 593 was considered the quietest, deadliest and deepest-diving submarine of its era. Her motto was *Via Tacita* - Latin for "Silent Strength."



Led by the submarine's captain, Lt. Cmdr. John Wesley Harvey, the sailors and civilians alike who died aboard the Thresher were truly men of genius and adventure. They included war veterans and Arctic explorers; academics and athletes; devoted family men and recent high school graduates. All were patriots.

Thirteen of the men lost that morning were civilian workers at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, and three of the Navy officers who perished were stationed at the Yard.

The loss of SSN 593 led directly to the creation of SUBSAFE, the Navy's enhanced safety program. Since its inception, no submarine passing thru the rigors of this process has suffered a similar fate. As a result of this legacy, the Navy has ensured that the sacrifice of those lost with the Thresher was not in vain.



The 129-foot flagpole which now stands in the middle of Memorial Circle represents the 129 brave pioneers who perished in the world's worst submarine disaster, so that they will never be forgotten.

Courtesy of the Thresher Society

John Wesley Harvey, the Thresher's last skipper, in a young lieutenant in the 1950s aboard the submarine USS Nautilus. Harvey assumed command of the Thresher just three months before her final dive in April 1963.

Courtesy of the Thresher Society

Project Compliments

We offer sincerest appreciation to President George H. W. Bush for his generous support and endorsement; as well as the communities of Portsmouth, Rye, and Hampton, NH; and Wells, ME.

We must also express the greatest appreciation to the Kittery Maine Improvement Foundation, a non-profit 501C3 entity established to support improvement projects to the benefit of the Town of Kittery, officers Judy Spiller, George Dow, Duncan McEachern, and Gerry Mylroie , who accepted sponsorship of the Thresher Project, enabling us to accord tax deductible status to our contributors.

Finally, especially meritorious credit goes to the Kittery Town Council and departments of the Town for unwavering support in making this memorial a reality.

Thanks to Donors

The Group fully acknowledges that this Project would not have come to fruition without every individual and company who made contributions large and small. For the record, more than 430 contributors from all around the United States (including 82 from Kittery) donated funds or in-kind materiel and services in the amount of \$216,874.61 to the project. 91 came forward to sponsor publication of D. Allen Kerr's book "Silent Strength" leading to sizeable and continuing contributions. And most certainly, the most generous contributions by our largest donors:

LANG LANDSCAPING SERVICES, GREENLAND, NH	\$25,000.00
H. L. PATTEN CONSTRUCTION, KITTERY	\$18,000.00
ANONYMOUS, KITTERY	\$13,864.41
PNS NAS NSE (SUPERINTENDENTS)	\$11,000.00
THE MEN & WOMEN OF ELECTRIC BOAT	\$10,015.00
NORTHROP GRUMMAN	\$5,000.00
NORTHEAST CREDIT UNION, PORTSMOUTH, NH	\$5,000.00
D. ALLEN KERR - SILENT STRENGTH AUTHOR, KITTERY*	\$5,702.76

* Additional proceeds from continuing sales to be contributed

FINALLY...FINALLY...A LAST (AND RARE) PERSONAL MESSAGE

So long, farewell, au revoir, auf wiedersehen, goodbye...

As your friendly local project administrator, my most heartfelt thanks and gratitude to all who receive this. A compound, complex, nearly impossible challenge....does it get any better than that?

You gave me laughs...and joy...and tears and sorrow...you gave me faith restored....and reinforced in what this country truly is no matter the daily headlines....you all showed "Yes, I Can" (*the Sammy Davis, Jr. version*)....I will take to the grave that the real people of this nation will always step up and set forth to do the right thing, as they have throughout its history.

For me, along with you no doubt, it is who I am...it is what I do. And I'm good with that.

Thanx for the ride. *garyb*